

MEMOS. FOR TO-MORROW.

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Meeting.
11 a.m.—Ladies' Club, Ambulance Association, at the City Hall.

THE
HONGKONG DISPENSARY
Established A.D. 1841.
香港大藥房

A. S. WATSON & Co.,
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AMERICAN, AND FRENCH PATENT
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Soda Water, Lemonade, Tonic Water,
Gingerade, Potass Water, Sarsaparilla
Water, and other Aerated Waters.
The Manufactory is under direct and
continuous European Supervision.

Hongkong, June 1, 1876. 7

As The publication of this issue commences
at 7.00 p.m.

The China Mail.
HONGKONG, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1884.

THE recent case of double murder Hongkong brings before the public peculiar phase of native customs. It is believed that the woman and man were murdered by villagers because the one was unfaithful to her husband, and

the other to his wife. In other words they had been guilty of illicit intercourse. The villagers apparently gave them a rough trial and then lynched them. Had the victims been guilty of a more serious offence than the one they

supposed to have committed, and had the double murder been followed by the horrible brutality of dismembering bodies, the whole story would favour the acts of some "vigilance committee."

deeds have, however, been perpetrated in a British Colony which is supposed to be governed on the most enlightened and humane principles. There is a point to be noticed in the affair—

neither the husband of one of the victims nor the wife of the other could have obtained redress in the courts of the Colony for the wrong which it is supposed they had suffered, and on account of which it is said that the double murder was committed.

was committed. The husband of woman murdered could not, in she have obtained in Her Majesty's court here or in England a divorce from wife because she was unfaithful, and

would, we believe, have found insurmountable difficulties in the way of his claiming damages against the man who seduced his daughter and her paramour. There can be no doubt that the bulk of the Chinese marriage

which take place in Hongkong are recognised by British law. Christians may be legally married here but must be contented with one wife. Some of the well to do Chinese prefer several wives, and if, as professing Christians,

they used British law to carry execution their polygamous desires would render themselves liable criminal prosecutions for bigamy. may be as well to add there is no

Colony, either for Europeans or Chinese, but marriages legally celebrated would be held to be perfectly contracts in the courts at home. China requires as much civilization

her customs relating to marriage
day, any other matters. Putting aside
the question of polygamy, can a
mischievous custom be imagined
allowing marriages to be arranged
'go-betweens'—the bride and

groom not having an opportunity of seeing each other until the last moment before the performance of the marriage ceremony. Marriages carried on under such conditions are reduced to the level of mercenary transactions.

level of the community, and the additional and often fatal damage that the qualities of the principals are unknown to each other. It is, however, in the customs governing the relations of husband and wife after

age that the brutality and injustice that the Chinese laws regulating wedd appear. A husband, for instance, can get a divorce from his wife on the frivolous grounds, but a wife is also debarred from obtaining a divorce.

her husband, however great his
may be. Incompatibility of
drunkenness, theft, desertion,
obedience, lawfulness, unduly
wards the husband or his pare
well as incompatibility or unfaithfulness

sufficient grounds on which a
may be divorced in China. A
case for divorce is tried not by
partial court of law, but by the
of the husband. When a man

and other male relatives and kin and these individuals, assembled once trial hall, are fully competent to pronounce a decree absolute, any qualifying act. The women

divorced may return to her parents if she has any, or she may be sold by her willom husband to a go-between, who disposes of her to the purchaser, who will pay the highest price for the most desirable property.

The murder of a wife and her unfaithfulness by her husband seems to be by law in China. A peculiar of this law is, indeed, that the

must kill both the offenders. In
one of the guilty couple and spinn
ether, the deed would not, accor
Chinese law, be distinguishab
murder, and he would be tried
crime before the head tribuna

native district. It is not quite this killing would be justified where the wife and her paramour not caught in the guilty act. peculiar feature of the law re-

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